

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action mailed October 15, 2007, claims 1-30 were rejected. In response, Applicants hereby request reconsideration of the application in view of the below-provided remarks. No claims have been added or canceled.

For reference, claims 1, 14, 15, 19, 30, and 31 are amended. In particular, claims 1, 14, 15, 19, 30, and 31 are amended to clarify the reference to the connection rule. The amendments of claims 1, 14, 15, 19, 30, and 31 are supported, for example, by the subject matter described in the specification at pages 10-11, paragraphs 44-45.

Response to Claim Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7-9, 12, 14-20, 22, 23, 25-28, 30, and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hutchinson et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,084,870, hereinafter Hutchinson). Additionally, claims 3, 6, 13, 21, 24, and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hutchinson in view of Dolbec et al. (U. S. Pat. Pub. No. 2006/0153562, hereinafter Dolbec). Additionally, claims 10 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hutchinson in view of Bartfai et al. (U. S. Pat. No. 6,381,643, hereinafter Bartfai). However, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are patentable over Hutchinson, Dolbec, and Bartfai for the reasons provided below.

Independent Claim 1

Claim 1, as amended, recites “a comparison module configured to compare the new connection to a connection rule, the connection rule defining a cabling connection, wherein the connection rule depends on a topology and a type of cabling” (emphasis added).

Applicants submit that Hutchinson does not disclose at least the aforementioned limitation of independent claim 1. The primary citation to Hutchinson relates to a line state message representing a connection type and comparing the line state message to a prior state signal variable, N_type. Hutchinson, col. 13, lines 41-59; Fig. 8. However,

there is no description in Hutchinson that would remedy the aforementioned limitation of claim 1. Thus, this contention is respectfully traversed.

Hutchinson explains that the line state message, L_indicate, is compared to a prior known connection type, N_type. Hutchinson, column 13, line 60 to column 14, line 6. Furthermore, Hutchinson explains that the prior known connection type, N_type, is one of four different connection types "A", "B", "M", or "S." Hutchinson further describes that "A" and "B" connection types form double loop rings, and that "M" and "S" connection types form single logical rings on a physical branching topology of a tree. Hutchinson, column 5, lines 51-56. However, comparing the line state message to the prior known connection type that is one of two different types of ring topologies is not the same as comparing a new connection to a connection rule, where the connection rule depends on a cabling connection topology and a type of cabling. Comparing a line state message to a prior known connection type does not involve comparing a type of cabling and does not otherwise relate to a type of cabling. In fact, Hutchinson appears to be silent with regard to comparing a new connection to a connection rule, where the connection rule depends on a cabling connection topology and a type of cabling. Thus, Hutchinson cannot reasonably be interpreted to disclose the indicated limitation of independent claim 1.

Therefore, Hutchinson does not disclose all of the limitations of claim because Hutchinson does not disclose comparing a new connection to a connection rule which depends on a network topology and a type of cabling. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit claim one is patentable over Hutchinson and request that the rejection of claim one under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) be withdrawn.

Independent Claims 14, 15, 19, 30, and 31

Applicants respectfully assert independent claims 14, 15, 19, 30, and 31 are patentable over Hutchinson at least for similar reasons to those stated above in regard to the rejection of independent claim 1. In particular, claim 14 recites "a cabling connection module configured to refuse network service via the new connection prior to a determination that the new connection is a legal connection according to a connection

rule, wherein the connection rule depends on a network topology and a type of cabling” (emphasis added). Claims 15, 19, 30, and 31 recite similar limitations.

Here, although the language of claims 14, 15, 19, 30, and 31 differ from the language of claim 1, and the scope of claims 14, 15, 19, 30, and 31 should be interpreted independently of claim 1, Applicants respectfully assert that the remarks provided above in regard to the rejection of claim 1 also apply to the rejections of claims 14, 15, 19, 30, and 31. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 14, 15, 19, 30, and 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) are respectfully requested.

Dependent Claims 2-13, 16-18, and 20-29

Claims 2-13, 16-18, and 20-29 depend from and incorporate all of the limitations of the corresponding independent claims 1, 15, and 19. Applicants respectfully assert claims 2-13, 16-18, and 20-29 are allowable based on allowable base claims. Additionally, each of claims 2-13, 16-18, and 20-29 may be allowable for further reasons.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the claims in view of the amendments and remarks made herein. A notice of allowance is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes a telephone interview would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the attorney listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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